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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EBB/TPP/MTA - CHEVER VOLTMER
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: AUSTRIAN RESPONSE ON GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVE

REF: (A) STATE 52628; (B) STATE 53346

¶1. Embassy shared reftels Aides Memoire with high level contacts in the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment, Health, Economics and Labor, and European and International Affairs, following up with Friedrich Huemer, Head of the Department for International Trade at Agriculture. He said that Austria's main focus with regard to the points we raised was the successful completion of the Doha Round, which should bring about positive effects, particularly for developing countries. He declined to discuss specific points of a possible agriculture package, but hoped that a successful agreement could be reached "within the next weeks", if all negotiation partners are willing to make concessions. With regard to agricultural biotechnology he said that Austria's negative stance on the promotion of biotech products, including in the developing countries, and on the current EU Commission's approval process is well-known and not subject to change.

¶2. Gabriela Habermayer, head of the Department for International Trade and WTO in the Ministry of Economics, called the President's request for \$770 million in new funding to address the food crisis "very generous." On the Doha Round she opined that a swift completion is possible, but an agreement should contain a strong commitment on Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) to emerging economies.

KILNER#